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INTRODUCTION to Research Notes: "Faits Malaccomplis and the Origins of Crisis"; and "Politics and the Cuban Missile Crisis": preliminary draft reports from the project, "Risks and Alternatives to Militarism After Desert Storm: Lessons from the Secret History of the Cuban Missile Crisis," a project of the Center for Psychosocial Studies in the Nuclear Age, Cambridge Hospital, Harvard Medical School.

        In the space of a week in October, 1962, the leaders of the two superpowers--neither of them adequately warned by their intelligence and policymaking apparatus, the two largest in world history--each presented the other with a stunning and mutually dangerous surprise.

    How could this happen?

    The same question arose in August, 1990. The five-month Gulf Crisis that led to the Iraq War in 1991 began with a comparable pair of surprises for two opposing leaders: one the president of a superpower, the other the head of an oil-producing state and recent purchaser of the "third most technically sophisticated armed forces in the world."

    As in 1962, an unforeseen and surprisingly reckless challenge--unlike before, clearcut aggression--was followed by an equally unforeseen and surprisingly reckless US response: indeed, the same response as in the previous case, a naval blockade accompanied by massive preparations for airstrike and invasion. (These were the only two instances of such a course in the postwar era).

    The parallels do not stop there. On October 9, 1990, I wrote a memo listing the following characteristics of the Gulf Crisis as of that moment, every one of which, word for word, applied as well to the Cuban Missile Crisis as of late October, 1962:

    "1. US warships are intercepting and searching, at gunpoint, ships of other nations on the high seas, implementing a US-initiated blockade.

    2. The US is assembling, with all possible speed, a massive, offensively-oriented airstrike and invasion force of bombers, carrier and amphibious task forces and ground combat divisions, to support attack options ranging from "surgical airstrikes" to full-scale invasion against the country being blockaded.

    3. The declared aim of the blockade and of the increasingly-

explicit threats of air and ground offensives is to force the country being blockaded and threatened to reverse and to withdraw to its own territory a deployment of its armed forces contrary to American interests and security.

4.   This aim, and the blockade supporting it, has the endorsement of a majority of a regional organization of which the targeted country is a member (and also--in 1990 though not in 1962--of all the permament members and nearly all of the other members of the Security Council of the UN and of the General Assembly).

5.   It is generally assumed (though not officially declared) that the airstrike and invasion force being built up has other aims as well: ousting the leadership and regime of the country being targeted and destroying its military capability. The existence of these incentives to attack, strongly argued within the US, strengthens the credibility of the threat implied by the buildup.

6. These more ambitious goals--which go well beyond restoring the status quo ante--have <u>not</u> been endorsed by any regional association nor by the UN, nor have the offensive military means that would be necessary to achieve them. A unilateral US offensive would, on the contrary, almost surely be condemned by most states in the region, whose very stability would be threatened by the anti-American emotions such a US intervention would arouse in their own populations.

Nevertheless, US-initiated war appears very likely if the announced US and multilateral demands to restore the status quo ante are not met soon.

7. Congressional elections are coming up in one month. Political calculations--not only of implications for the imminent Congressional elections but for the Presidential election two years off--saturate every comparison of "options," though this is never acknowledged.

8. Prior to the onset of the crisis there was pressure by the opposition party to apply sanctions to the country now being blockaded, with the President resisting such proposals: both before and after the threatening surprise deployment, this Administration policy was described by its domestic opposition as "appeasement."

9. Hence--along with a total failure of the Administration to foresee the military moves threatening US interests, and Administration acceptance of deceptive assurances--the Administration was politically vulnerable when it was caught by surprise. If it had done nothing, it would have suffered in November elections and in the Presidential race two years later both from this passivity and failure, from having failed to foresee or forestall the move, and from imputed gullibility and weakness.

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10. The deception came from someone who, while far from a formal ally, was being regarded as to some extent a partner in shaping events, or at least someone whose private word could be trusted. Public accusations of "lying" figured prominently in the President's surprisingly strong response.

11. The strength and speed of the President's countermoves-- and of Allied and international support for them--were as surprising to most observers as the initial provocation, and totally unforeseen by the adversary.

12. If war comes in the near future, it will probably be deliberately initiated by the US, its demands and threats having not met with success.

13. However, there is a significant possibility of a loss of control by one side or the other--unauthorized action by subordinates, false alarms, accidents, misinterpreted or misattributed incidents, misinterpretation of alerts or reconnaissance--leading to an all-out "response" or preemption by the other side.

14. Moreover, a third party (in this case, Israel) might trigger all-out hostilities by its own misinterpretations, loss of control, or "defensive" actions (as Cuba came close to doing, by its antiaircraft fire in 1962) unauthorized by its major ally.

15. The decision-making process is dominated almost exclusively by the Executive Branch, with no decision-making role for Congress, or Allies: the crisis is seen, with a good deal of reality, as a duel between two individuals, the President and an opposing dictator."

Another analogy could have headed that list: both crises began with an attempted fait accompli, which led to a dangerous military crisis instead of to passive resistance by the US and its allies. (This was the nature, in each case, of the pair of surprises that constituted the crisis).

And each of them, of course, led to a spectacular US success, in terms the President defined and the country accepted: by far the two most dramatic US victories of the postwar era. To look critically, to question American decisions in these two cases--of all that might be looked at!--is to argue with success.

But there are times when that is what needs to be done. We can all be thankful that many of the dangers that seemed to loom in the Gulf Crisis were not realized, though others were, catastrophically. But in retrospect, most of the fears seem to have been well-founded, reflecting genuine risks. And what did happen was terrible enough.

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Moreover, as months go by, there seems less and less basis for any belief that this was the war to end war, or the last such crisis. Nor should anyone be content alone with the Lessons of Iraq that the Pentagon learns, and teaches, or with the selling of a new Iraq Syndrome to replace the skeptical Vietnam model.

The list of parallels above--rather striking, it seems to me, for a pair of episodes I have nowhere else seen compared--seems adequate to make the case that an effort to learn lessons from either one will do well to make a comparative study. That was the study I proposed in October, 1990, and again in March, 1991 (see the attached memo, "Risks and Alternatives to Militarism After Desert Storm: Lessons from the Secret History of the Cuban Missile Crisis," March 23, 1991), and which is now being funded, mainly through the Center for Psychosocial Research in the Nuclear Age, Harvard University, and through the Agape Foundation. The accompanying draft reports are preliminary outputs from that study.

In my October memo, I suggested: "My own best understanding of the Cuban Crisis, much more than the conventional, currently-accepted accounts, reveals possible parallels beyond the surface ones that could explain a number of puzzling aspects of the present situation," starting with: "how the crisis arose, on both sides, including the surprising potential for mutual surprise, and the multiple consequences of attempting a _fait accompli_."

The two draft research notes that accompany this memo address precisely these questions. The thoughts on _faits accomplis_, in particular, draw on research and draft notes of mine that go back to 1964, and years in-between. As I wrote in October:

"My 1964 study of the Cuban Missile Crisis along with certain much less serious crises that shared certain common characteristics with it--the U-2 crisis of 1960, Suez, the Skybolt crisis of 1962-- led me to identify a particular, complex and precise crisis-pattern such that one could predict and explain a great variety of sequential and associated phenomena from a few initial circumstances.

"I called my description of these phenomena and how they hung together: "_Faits Malaccomplis_ and the Origins of Crisis." By the term "_Faits Malaccomplis_" I referred to attempts at a _fait accompli_ that, for one reason or another, failed to achieve the specific effects sought; in failing, I discovered, these abortive efforts often generated crises, to the surprise of both parties. The Cuban Missile Crisis seemed to me the most significant example of this class of crises: until this fall."

The real power and rewards of this abstract model, I believe, remain to be demonstrated in its application to the full details of the Cuban Missile Crisis--many of which have never been reported-- and to a number of other crises to which I allude briefly in this

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overview.   These comprehensive analyses and comparisons of the crises--including the escalation of the Vietnam War, 1964-65-- remain to be presented, along with other aspects of a conceptual framework described in my March proposal.

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--Why was this episode a crisis?

K's move was not seen, it turns out--contrary to the impression given to the public--as posing a danger of attack on the US, either in the short run or the long run. Or any new military danger at all, any new danger to the physical security of the US; or to its ability to accomplish any legitimate goals (as distinguished from its goal of invading or intimidating Cuba).

It did pose a political threat to JFK: to the credibility of his predictions, to the image of his character and values and of K's evaluation of him, to the image of the effectiveness of his warnings and threats. This threat would be realized in about a week or earlier, when K's move became publicly known.

The Administration response, on the other hand, did raise short-run risks of major war, possibly even all-out nuclear war: a crisis for the nation, by any standards.

--Why did the Administration create a crisis? How is this behavior (creating a national security crisis in response to perception of a personal or political crisis) to be understood? Who was largely responsible for this choice, and with what motives?

--What is a "crisis"? What characteristics do such episodes typically have in common; what are defining elements? What is the class of such cases, which deserve comparison and analysis in the search for recurrent patterns, for better understanding, prediction, "management" or avoidance?

--Defining elements:

Danger: especially, physical, military, "national security" threats; in the "short run";

Opportunity: to avoid or reduce the danger, in the short time available: but just barely, with difficulty or creativity or luck, not easily or certainly. In some cases, opportunity, at best or with luck, to improve the situation beyond what it was or what could have been achieved before.

--Another characteristic turns out to be so common in episodes that are perceived as crises as to be almost a defining element, though it is rarely listed as such [actually, to the contrary--I note after first writing this--Fen Osler Hampton (Int. Sec. Winter 1984-85) quotes Charles Hermann as including this in the definition of crises, in 1969]:

Surprise: the threatening situation as unexpected, unforeseen, often unimagined; hence, unprepared for, with relevant resources and systems unalert and unmobilized. This factor is typically a major part of the reason for the urgency and intensity of the danger.

--Why do dangerous surprises seem so common in the history of major states, despite their heavy investment in intelligence apparatuses in the interest of avoiding them? Simple incompetence, ignorance, bad theory, ideological distortion, bureaucratic conflict? The complexity and irreducible uncertainty of international behavior (as in weather prediction)? All of these figure to some degree in many political surprises, but my own study of a number of specific cases otherwise described as "crises" reveals another very common element, generally unnoticed as a frequently recurring feature:

The conscious and successful effort of one international state "player" to produce a (generally unpleasant) surprise in another.

And this feature quite typically appears in tandem with another:

The state that has successfully surprised its adversary (or ally) finds itself in turn surprised by the other's response.

Thus, in the Cuban Missile Crisis (and compare the Iraq War), in summary form:

(a) K produced a politically dangerous surprise for JFK.

(b) JFK responded by surprising K just as much, even more dangerously: with a clear threat and danger (to both) of war.

Why did K do (a), given the allegedly "obvious" danger of evoking (b)?

Why did JFK do (b), given its universally obvious dangers?

JFK is frequently and plausibly criticised for over-reacting irresponsibly, recklessly, despite his subsequent success (given the political and personal nature of the threat K posed to him, rather than--as he claimed, and the public accepted at the time--an imminent physical threat to national security or survival).

But was not K acting irresponsibly and recklessly (as JFK claimed) in "provoking" JFK, even though on closer analysis K was acting legally and following US precedent?

Both leaders were contributing to a shared risk, which was real and grave, (and perhaps greater than they realized) even if less than it appeared to many.

Why did they accept/choose/generate such risks? How did they underestimate them? Why were the initial expectations of each falsified? How was it each was so sharply and easily surprised?

What does this experience teach us about the likelihood and dangers of mutual surprise of powerful leaders in the future, and the risk of major or nuclear war?

To understand the Cuban Missile Crisis better, it helps to compare it to a number of other crises which turn out to share common features. To do so helps to understand the emergence, and the significant risks (not all realized) of the Iraq War.

I find a common sub-category of crises in which there are two surprises, at least, at the very core of the conflict: the nature of the initial challenge, and the basic response. Each of two states has attempted, successfully, to surprise the other--despite the fact that each has experienced staffs dedicated to averting their leaders' being so surprised.

It is precisely this pair of surprising challenges that constitutes the crisis, the danger, for one, or often both of the states.

This pattern--that one dangerous, unpleasant, challenging surprise leads to another--seems not to be generally recognized or well-understood. Indeed, that ignorance seems to be why the pattern recurs so frequently. Those who set out to construct a construct a surprise for another national leader or state--despite, often, considerable experience of political affairs and capable intelligence and policymaking staffs--seem generally to underestimate the uncertainty of the response to their move, the likelihood that it will itself be unpleasantly surprising.

When one looks at the motives, on the other side, for that surprising (often aggressive, violent, dangerous) response, one often finds them rooted in the very fact of surprise and in the measures--typically, involving deception--that were necessary to achieve it.

There is a sense in the responding leader not only that he has been endangered--in a way that calls for fast (often unconventional, violent, ordinarily-forbidden) action to protect himself--but that he has been deceived, fooled, doubled-crossed, embarrassed, made a fool of, treated with disrespect ("dissed," in ghetto language) in a way that calls for revenge (even at some risk to other interests) and in any case for violent, bold, risk-taking

behavior aimed at embarrassing or humiliating the other in order to restore his own dignity.

(If such motivation sounds masculine, it is not by chance: the anarchic international system rewards with leadership those men who feel specially sensitive to the demands of a code of machismo).

Described in these terms, the nature of the response might seem understandable enough to be easily predictable; yet it does not seem, in fact, to be commonly predicted. Leaders who are themselves subject to such motivational pressures, and know they are, still frequently (though not always) fail to foresee them in other leaders. There is a common failure of empathy here, among men of power, and their staffs: which leads precisely to dangerous crises.

What I seem to have discovered (a quarter of a century ago) is a common and dangerous failing of state leaders to appreciate certain dangers of deception and secrecy, the full extent of the risks of undertaking to deceive and surprise powerful political actors (which may include their own legislatures or publics). They are blinded in part, as it happens, by their own knowledge, unshared by the "laity," of the frequency with which secrecy and deception can be successfully achieved, long enough to be powerfully effective.

More generally, it is dangerous to set out to humiliate a state leader (usually male, or male-like): who, whether relatively powerful or not, usually controls some destructive capability by virtue of his role, though its use against a more powerful opponent may entail self-destruction. That might seem self-evident: yet the humiliation of an opponent is not infrequently a fundamental goal of policy, either tacitly (as in Cuba II) or with startling explicitness, as in the Iraq War.

This usually arises in pursuit of revenge, i.e., retaliation for one's own humiliation--actual, potential, or attempted--either by the person one is trying to humiliate in turn, or--very commonly, perhaps even generally--by some other person, more powerful or less vulnerable, against whom it is inexpedient to seek revenge and for whom the current target is a scapegoat. (On the latter point, see my notes on rage...).

What seems often to lead to crises is that in the effort to produce a Fait Accompli--where the primary motive is not to humilate anyone (but, perhaps, to avert one's own humiliating failure)--a leader totally ignores or greatly underrates the effect of the secrecy and deception that are instrumental in pursuing the Fait Accompli in humiliating others who are taken in, fooled, by it. These others may be either the main target of the deception, or in some cases allies or others who are incidentally deceived by it and get out on a limb.

These victims are then subject to feelings of rage and desire for retaliation that are strongly motivational, spurring them to consider quick and violent countermeasures that--given their cost and danger or tabu status--would not normally be considered as appropriate responses to the "objective" challenge, if one abstracted from "the way it was done," the disrespectful, humiliating challenge to (male) personal dignity.

For a political leader, especially a national leader, of course, the implications of such a challenge, such disrespectful behavior, do go beyond its immediate effects on his personal feelings. It threatens his authority, his image and prestige in the eyes of the public, the legislature, his own subordinates and subordinate agencies--i.e., his influence within the executive branch and his own society--and with the nation's allies and the international system: thus, his general influence and effectiveness, and his own ability to stay in power. (See Fen Osler Hampson's comments on this, citing his own work and Richard Neustadt's). If he heads the government, the danger can even, realistically, be said to extend to the power of the nation in the international system.

Insulted leaders and their courtiers in and out of government commonly claim such transcendent implications in justifying their taking such slights seriously and responding violently. These claims tend to be sincere; indeed,(mostly male) power-holders commonly have trouble distinguishing sharply between their own narrow, short-run personal interests and the interests of society at large. But there is also some objective substance to these beliefs, which their own experience of governmental affairs tends to confirm.

An unexpectedly aggressive, dangerous response may be the enraged, violent, humiliation-seeking response of an intended target of a Fait Accompli, who has "inadvertently" and unexpectedly been made to feel humiliated and politically endangered by having been successfully deceived by the perpetrator of a Fait Accompli.

Failing to foresee this possible effect or to take measures to reduce it, the perpetrator underrates the risks of his course, a factor which encourages him to undertake it, and then in turn to be surprised by the reaction, which constitutes a crisis for himself, encouraging him in turn to escape it by means that produce crises for others...

There is here, evidently, the potential for an escalating chain of crisis, with a cycle of humiliation at its heart, launched often by a failure of empathy: a lack of desire to humiliate but a failure to foresee it, or else to care sufficiently, to imagine empathetically the possible response to it by "putting oneself in the place" of a ("lesser," perhaps dispised) opponent.

Thus, concretely: The US-supported regime of Batista in Cuba--like its predescessors and like neo-colonial regimes generally--was experienced widely in Cuba, and above all by aspiring professionals and idealistic nationalists like Castro and Che Guevara (like Ho Chi Minh and Giap in Indochina, or Gandhi in South Africa and India)--as a prolonged experience of humiliation and insult, to their fathers and to themselves.

That is not, in general, the conscious intent of foreign rulers or their local proxies, but it is almost universally the subjective reality of the situation for the local people, and especially for those aspiring to professional careers or to political leadership: one that is little appreciated as a reality or an effective factor by the rulers from beginning to the end of their regime.

The committed, costly, prolonged, dangerous nationalist revolutionary struggle that may ensue is fueled at least as much by this sense of humiliation and desire for personal and national vindication and dignity as by the reality of material exploitation.

(The following points could be put in general terms, like the above paragraph, as applying to Indochina, Nicaragua, China as well: but I will now address Cuba specifically).

But Castro's eventual victory (like that of the Sandinistas, later) was felt by the whole society of the former hegemonic power, and especially its governing elites, as, in turn, a humiliation: both an embarrassing failure and a contraction of its influence, its prestige and authority internationally.

This effect is not exactly unwelcome to the newly triumphant revolutionary regime, but it was not a primary goal, and the dangers it poses were and remain (for a while) underestimated.

It becomes a US goal to rollback Cuba's independence: but also to retaliate for Castro's "impudence," his lack of deference, his defiance.

The Bay of Pigs, which seeks not only to overthrow his regime but to assassinate Castro, ends instead in a dramatic humiliation for the US President personally. Publicly, he accepts responsibility, shows "wisdom," takes the loss philosophically and withdraws from the effort to intervene.

Privately, JFK and his brother are enraged, develop an obsession with vindication, act, in the words of his Secretary of Defense, "hysterical" about Castro. They set in motion the largest covert program in history against him: the head of which states explicitly at the outset and thereafter that only US invasion can

ultimately accomplish the aim of the program, overthrow by October, 1962.

All diplomatic and operational preparations for invasion are made during 1962, openly exercised, with final preparations, in great secrecy, ordered during October.

Both Castro and Khrushchev see all this, having penetrated the covert campaign and witnessing the exercises. In a way totally unimagined by any US officials, even those few who were aware of the existence of the covert programs, or by American analysts for more than a generation afterwards, Khrushchev foresees this impending "loss of Cuba" as an intense prospective humiliation, threatening his and Soviet prestige and influence throughout the Communist and Third World and even his maintenance of power.

What JFK and RFK saw as an attempt to rectify their own humiliation by Castro was seen in the spring of 1962 by Khrushchev as a prospect that would endanger and humiliate him: and he searched, desperately, for a way out. (The "loss of Cuba" was going to cap a whole year of humiliations and frustrations: Kennedy's "calling his bluff" on the missile gap and on his threats on Berlin and East Germany; Kennedy's and McNamara's open discussion of possible nuclear first-strikes in the event of conflict, based on their announced nuclear superiority; and various challenges by China and others, even by Castro in Cuba).
Khrushchev conceives of a way of saving Cuba and simultaneously "turning the tables" against the US in a whole variety of spheres. That this abrupt change in the international status quo, boldly ("impudently", provocatively) asserting, acting on and achieving a status of equality with the US, would amount to a humiliating reversal for the US and specifically for its current leaders, could hardly be missed by the Soviet decision-makers. Indeed, the most experienced among them, such as Mikoyan and Gromyko, had sharp misgivings; yet they did not press them to the limit.

Yet Khrushchev himself, imposing his will without much resistance to it, does seem to have missed entirely what the meaning of that consequence might be, in terms of the vigor and aggressiveness of the US response and its effects on the Soviets and himself.

How could that be? My first answer is to point out that this failure falls within a well-established historical pattern; this is what national leaders in this situation commonly do, this is what to expect from the "hidden history" of international crises. Krushchev was acting "normally" in his failure to take account, or adequate account, of this effect of his actions. At this point I am much more confident in pointing to the existence of this phenomenon, and its importance, than I am in attempting to explain it.

One might conjecture, adapting the perspective of depth psychology, a largely unconscious, only partly acknowledged satisfaction in the prospect of his antagonist's "embarrassment" or even humiliation: failing, wishfully, in unconscious pursuit of this "secondary" or unacknowledged aim, to admit into his awareness the full scale of this prospective humiliation, the likelihood of retaliation, and the resulting dangers for his own program and himself.

In this way, it may be, the prospect "I'm going to get him...back" is frequently unaccompanied by conscious awareness or calculation of the likelihood that "he" will be driven to extraordinary lengths to seek, and may find, ways to retaliate in turn.

At any rate, Khrushchev sets out to avert the loss of Cuba (and to improve his own bargaining power in other context of recent and continuing humiliation, including Berlin, US bases on the borders of Russia, and the arms race) by means of a Fait Accompli.

Consciously, so far as we know, he does not aim primarily at the humiliation of JFK, but for whatever reasons (perhaps including a semi-conscious desire to embarrass JFK, which leads him wishfully to disregard the likely intensity and the risks of this effect) he disregards the dangers of doing so, taking no special steps to avert this or reduce it.

In the event, the potential humiliation of JFK becomes intense, partly for reasons the Soviets did not fully control. It was not totally foreseeable or totally their fault--certainly they did not desire it--that JFK, believing K's assurances meant to deceive him, made two explicit warnings against what K was in process of doing (too late to influence Khrushchev's move, unless by a truly extraordinary and bureaucratically dangerous reversal).

Nor did they, apparently, foresee or, of course, control, the political challenge raised by the Republicans in the fall election campaign to the ongoing Soviet buildup. It was this that elicited JFK's two warnings in September, which in turn made the ensuing crisis inevitable.

On the other hand, these matters were not totally unforeseeable, either, at least as possibilities. They were results of the Soviets' own actions. The prior large, unprecedented buildup of Soviet assistance to Cuba was not at all unlikely to attract the attention of the Republicans, and even of Democrats in Congress, that it did cause. That this might evoke an explicit warning from the President was hardly unforeseeable.

Leaders, and for that matter staffs and intelligence agencies, can't foresee everything, realistically. But these are things that might well have been foreseen, and better prepared against, by

Soviet officials if the <u>extreme secrecy functionally required by the choice of a strategy of Fait Accompli</u> had not sharply limited Soviet bureaucratic awareness of the project.

Again, this represents a kind of risk--<u>generally unappreciated, unforeseen, by high-level decision-makers</u>--of choosing a secretive, deceptive course, which denies them normal bureaucratic feedback.

On October 16, 1962, JFK actually found himself--to a degree that could not entirely have been anticipated and was surely not intended by Khrushchev in the spring or early summer--made politically vulnerable and potentially embarrassed by Khrushchev's move to a degree that could hardly have been exceeded: thanks to the effects of Khrushchev's earlier, publicly known preparations, the response to them of the opposing party just prior to an election, and to his own "gullible" reassurances in response to this domestic challenge.

The circumstances, and the intense vulnerability, <u>were almost exactly matched by George Bush's situation on August 2, 1990, when his quasi-ally Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.</u>

In both cases, the American President set out secretly on a course of action intended not only to avert or reverse the humiliating policy failure but to humiliate his opponent. In JFK's case, there was the irony that the President who was led to aim at this was one who earlier, later and even during the crisis was almost uniquely expressive of the importance of foregoing, in general, any intent to humiliate an opponent, because of the dangers of doing so.

One might note that Bush, despite spectacular success in some respects, has so far failed in this explicit objective. It seems no more easy to drive Saddam Hussein from political life by humiliating him than to do this to Richard Nixon.

Risk-taking in the Cuban Missile Crisis

In Cuba, the hawks and doves divided on two dimensions: the level of risk they found acceptable; the level of actual risk they perceived.

Doves tended to find only very low risks acceptable, and at the same time to see the actual risks as extremely high. Hawks found the actual risks very low, while they would have accepted levels of risk much higher than the doves (though not necessarily so high as many outside critics, or even inside doves, thought the actual risks to be).

It is easier to make distinctions among various states of mind in the policy-makers in terms of numbers--subjective probabilities, or betting odds--than by purely verbal expressions. [see estimates by JFK, Nitze, McGeorge Bundy...]

The problem that I see after a quarter-century's reflection on the Cuban Missile Crisis and subsequent history is not that either American or Soviet leaders are willing--in the kinds of circumstances that have actually so far been experienced, including crises and limited wars--to take actions that they see as nearly certain to lead to all-out war, nuclear or non-nuclear, or as having a high chance of doing so: 70, 80, 90% Nor that they have been or will be likely to misperceive a situation that is "actually" that risky for one that is much less so.

What I find in my studies is that in actual, recurrent circumstances leaders on both sides have secretly been willing to "accept" risks of major war, including nuclear war, that they themselves have estimated at levels that are low to moderate in numerical terms but are disturbingly high in view of the stakes.

Thus, Paul Nitze told Harry Rowen, immediately after the crisis, that he had put the chance of nuclear war at "one in ten"-- a 10% probability--if the US had struck the missiles on Cuba: a course he favored if the Soviets did not back down. I was shocked by that revelation at the time, even though I was a strong cold warrior, who favored no concessions to the Soviets during the crisis because I thought it highly likely that Khrushchev would back down without them. (Even though he did so, I now feel that I was considerably overconfident of this at the time; I think his backdown reflected in good part our "luck" and unforeseeable circumstance).

Nitze claimed that he was "low man" on the Executive Committee (ExComm) in this estimate. Some of his colleagues, of course, opposed this course of action, no doubt in part for this reason. But others, like Nitze, favored it. Evidently they found a risk of nuclear war even higher than 10% "acceptable" in some easily-foreseeable circumstances. I was startled, and appalled, to learn that I was working with officials who held such values.

At the same time, I believed that the actual risk of nuclear war, even if the President ordered an attack on Cuba (which I did not favor), was very much lower than this, because of the extreme nuclear superiority of the US and conventional superiority in the Caribbean. (Again, I think I underestimated this risk; Nitze may have been about right).

[Summary of further points: I believe McNamara and JFK were, if anything, even less willing to attack Cuba than I was, once the missiles had been deployed. I think that JFK was determined to settle the conflict by a trade rather than attack Cuba, so that he saw the risks of a nuclear war as numerically low, say 1-2% (as McGeorge Bundy has estimated in retrospect): essentially the risk that events would get out of his control, with unauthorized actions occurring or pressures building up to a level he could not resist.

I further think he probably underestimated this latter risk, including the possibility of uncontrolled actions by others and his ability to predict or control his own behavior under increased pressure: say a better estimate might have been 2-4% or even 5-10%. But even if a leaders like JFK could have been helped to perceive these more realistic, somewhat higher estimates of risk, I believe that he would nevertheless have "accepted" them, no doubt "reluctantly."

All of these estimates represent a level of risk of nuclear war--or even of major non-nuclear war--that is frighteningly, unjustifiably, unconscionably high for a President to have accepted under the actual circumstances as JFK knew them to be: in preference to alternative courses of which he was aware: even in light of his plausible belief that some of those alternatives might have risked his own impeachment.

The same is true of the risks that Khrushchev accepted at the time: even if he, too, was determined from the beginning to avert still higher risks by conceding if necessary (as he ultimately did).

This judgment is not modified by my belief that any of the other presidents we have had in the last 45 years (except possibly Carter) would probably have taken actions in the same circumstances that were at least as risky, in some cases much more so. The same holds for other Soviet leaders (except Gorbachev, after his first year or so).

It is what I see as the willingness of "normal" American and Soviet leaders (and no doubt others) to take 1-10% risks of nuclear war in comparatively trivial and frequently encountered circumstances--to avert or redress personal humiliations or failures of policy--that defines for me a terrible existential challenge to the survival of humanity and other forms of life.

(Leadership attitudes toward long-run environmental perils are, of course, quite comparably ominous).

\cmc\Hampson
June 17, 1991

Notes on Fen Osler Hampson, "The Divided Decision-Maker," International Security Winter 1984-85, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp. 130-165

(See note in \cmc\themes, June 17, 1991)

I think of JFK as "creating" a national security crisis (rather than K); but this is as seen by many of the insiders on the ExComm, led by McNamara (and probably the President). Or rather: they may never have seen it consciously that way, but that reflected denial; their own evaluation of the situation clearly implied that. As McN said, "This is not a military problem, it's a domestic political problem," based as much on what JFK had said as on anything K had done.

But that was not the case for the Republican challengers in the election campaign, who were already defining the Soviet non-nuclear buildup on Cuba as a national security problem, calling for a military response: a blockade if not an invasion. They could certainly be counted on to claim that missiles constituted a major national security problem, both for political reasons and because they simply did not agree with McNamara, JFK or McG. (They saw matters more like the JCS, Nitze or Dillon). From their perspective, K had unequivocally created the national security crisis.

At the same time, they were unaware of JFK's Mongoose program--as both a provocation and evidence of JFK's concern and activism--or invasion preparations. (These bear on who initiated what the Soviets call the "Caribbean Crisis.") (Compare the public's ignorance--and perhaps JFK's, in detail--of the preparations of the Eisenhower-Nixon Administration for Cuba I, during the election campaign of 1960).

Suppose--what no one has ever hypothesised--that Khrushchev had moved MRBMs to Cuba in October, 1960--as he could have done! and as he talked about doing only a few months later, in the spring of 1961!--after Nixon had taken a soft line in the debates and had argued against the legality of US intervention in Cuba! The parallel to the Missile Crisis would have been exact, given the relative positions of the Administration and the challenger!

What I believe K expected JFK to do in October 1962--keep the Soviet missiles secret, if he discovered them, till after the Congressional elections--was exactly what Nixon intended to do about the Soviet sub base at Cienfuegos in August, 1970! He was thwarted in this by an "inadvertent" leak by a Pentagon press officer (really "inadvertent"?! This is exactly what JFK would have expected in 1962! Check accounts: was this not an attempt to

force Nixon's hand, based on suspicion either of him or perhaps of Kissinger?). Even then, Nixon used "quiet diplomacy": exactly what K would have expected from JFK. So my (and now Beschloss's) hypothesis about K's possible expectations in 1962 amounts to imagining that K hoped and expected that JFK would behave as Nixon (who, but for false voting in 1960 would have been in JFK's place in 1962) actually did behave 8 years later.

However, K may have not understood the differences in context in the two cases: in particular, the effect on US politics of K's own prior buildup of Soviet materiel in Cuba in 1962, leading to a JFK warning and salience in the 1962 election campaign (as in 1960): all this on top of the Republican-Democratic history on the issue of 1960-61. (There is a new Evans and Novak story of two weeks ago about the possibility of SS-20s in Cuba. Now that Castro may again be a salient target, after Iraq, could this whole issue come back?!)

Hampson compares JFK's handing of the missile crisis in 1962 to Nixon's of Cienfuegos in 1970. Compare LBJ's reaction to news of night attacks in the Tonkin Gulf in August of 1964 and in September, 1964!

See important marginal notes on article!

C:\CMC\hampson

Daniel Ellsberg
\ mil \pp\rage
April 10, 1982
[Additional comments, May 31, 1991, in brackets]

Reflections on Rage, Scapegoating, Massacre and Crises

In "Overcoming Procrastination," by Albert Ellis and Willian J. Knaus (NAL, NY. 1977) the authors question whether abreaction, "living out feelings from your past which you presumably have held in or repressed over the years,"is worthwhile. They describe results of this, in Freud's experience and others, as questionable (Gestalt, Reichian and primal therapy).

"Does this do more than temporary good?" [To "blow off steam"].Doesn't it often do more harm than good, in that such feelings as anger get practiced and reinforced by expression? For, as you tell someone off, angrily push him away, or savagely beat a pillow that you imagine represents his head, don't you reinforce the belief with which you make yourself angry--"He shouldn"t have done that to me, that lousy son-of-a-gun! I hope he drops dead!" [May 31, 1991: Thich Nhat Hanh made this point in almost the same words in a lecture on Mt. Madonna, May, 1991: better, he suggested, to work off energy by jogging than to rehearse violence by beating a pillow.]

"RET [rational-emotive therapy] tends to resolve this dilemma by encouraging peopple to express their appropriate rather than their inappropriate feelings. Thus, if you feel displeased about someone's behavior and you wish to express that feeling to this person, you assert yourself and constructively try to get him or her to change the behavior..

"Anger or rage, however, almost always amounts to an inappropriate feeling, in that it follows from your demanding, not merely wanting, another to stop behaving in an obnoxious manner, and from you denigrating this person, in toto, rther than his or her acts. Consequently, in expressing anger you act aggressively rather that assertively,..." (116-117).

The distinctions and suggestions expressed above are like Barbara Deming's, in her essay "On Anger." And like Deming and Gandhi, Ellis emphasizes the distinction between a person's self or being and her actions, behavior; and suggests that one should refrain from judging the former, especially negatively, and especially hating the person, or condemning, rejecting, scorning, disregarding, or violently hurting, killing or insulting, humiliating her: while judging and even hating some of her acts, and acting nonviolently (in assertion of one's own beliefs and values) to block those actions or their effects, even at the cost

of one's own suffering.

Ellis and Knaus consistently extend this prescription -- judge/condemn/hate the action, not the person (who is neither bad in all respects nor all the time, nor unchangeable, nor less than human)--to oneself. That is, one should not judge or condemn one's own self--as if, in toto, or for all time, and hyperbolically, without understanding or compassion--for some failing or even crime, rather than condemning the action itself.

Jeffry Masson, by contrast, insists on the validity and importance of judging and condemning the person, by their acts. His axiom is, Good people do not commit evil, wrongful, harmful acts; people who do such things are bad people, evil. Why does this seem so important to him?

Why is he so eager to condemn? Is it: to deny, or project? He does tend also to insist: "You and me, we're not like that! We wouldn't do that!"

He says this in the guise not of congratulating us but of making the point that these other people are different, bad and evil, sadistic, in an identifiable way that distinguishes them from us. (My general hypothesis about JMM is that he is ashamed of his his own complicity in his abuse by his parents, and his dependence on them, his continued passivity--acceptance of their behavior, compliance with their demands, silence to them about his complaints--and conceals this behavior from himself, along with his anger and shame about it, becoming very angry at any suggestion that any victim in any contributes to her (he identifies, especially, with female victims) oppression or is in any way, to the slightest degree, responsible (though not blameworthy) for it.

He denounces that as "blaming the victim." (He hates the Arendt theses: both the blaming of Jewish passivity and the description of Eichmann as banal, not especially evil or really, special in any way).

But this interpretation does not fully answer the questions about him above. [May 31, 1991: The above points on Masson must have been added sometime after 1982, since I had not met Jeffrey then.]

The authors do not ever, in their discussion, address another aspect of the common inappropriateness of strong anger or rage, or of expressing it: that it is commonly (always? almost always?) displaced from someone else, in the past or present. That is, the anger that is felt consciously, or that is expressed when anger is expressed (i.e., less often than it is felt) is "really" evoked by displacement from or association with someone else in a different situation. If there is an association with the past or other person or situation, a similarity in the situation, that triggering

element or similarity is usually unconscious, too, so that the "reason" for the anger, what it is that makes you angry (as well as "who it is") is misconstrued and misexpressed.

I don't believe Deming makes this point, either. Or perhaps, Gandhi.

This morning I woke up with the thought: Certain emotions-- powerful anger, rage, hatred (desire to hurt or destroy)--are never or almost never consciously felt or expressed "appropriately": i.e., addressed to the persons or situations that really evoke such strong emotion (as distinct from some more, or less, arbitrary representative of them in the present context, a likeness or scapegoat), and with an accurate understanding of why the emotion is felt, i.e., what it is in the person, relation, behavior or situation that predictably evokes the reaction.

In other words, when the anger is felt, or one is tempted to express it, it would virtually always be appropriate to ask: Who am I (they) really angry at, and why? The answer does not always or exclusively lie in the past; even in the present, the anger is displaced. (The immediate , conscious target is a stand-in for someone else in the immediate present or past, who in turn evokes or stands-in for someone in the more distant past).

Why the frequency or universality of this displacement, or rather, these multiple displacements? Why the commonness of denial, repression, concealment from oneself?

A hypothesis is that such intense emotions first arise in infancy (as distinct from childhood: this draws on Melanie Klein). They are not only "pre-Oedipal," they are pre-verbal, pre- locomotive. They arise when the infant cannot verbalize either the emotion or the situation giving rise to it. The emotion can be, and is expressed non-verbally, by crying, facial expression, contortion... This may lead to comforting; even if it does not, the emotion is expressed anyway.

Here there is a problem with my explanation: for the infants do not, at this stage, repress or displace their rage, or fail to express it, even though the reasons for doing so will never be so strong again: at this stage, prior to their ability even to walk or feed themselves, they are both totally vulnerable to this infinitely stronger person, and totally dependent on her and her goodwill. Both of these are reasons not to risk displeasing her by expressing these strong complaints to her directly. Yet the baby does anyway, even when the immediate results are not pleasing.

My hypothesis has to be, I guess, that this pattern changes as the child grows somewhat older. At some point it learns that it is too dangerous--in terms of immediate punishment, or general loss of affection and care-taking--to express to these powerful

persons, the parents, the emotions that they, peculiarly, continue to evoke. The same applies to certain feelings about siblings, where again the punishment comes from the parents.

And since it is dangerous to express these feelings, it is dangerous even to be conscious of them, to be tempted to express them; better to deny and repress them, or learn to displace their targets, either to oneself or other scapegoats.

It is, above all, the parents (initially, the mother) , who evoke these strong emotions: in other words, the initial targets of such emotions are not only powerful, they are all-powerful, awesomely potent, both in fantasy and in reality, to a degree that is never so true again. This is a reality, both in terms of the infant's needs and the relative disparity in destructive power, the unlimited ability to hurt. And this reality is further magnified, if that is possible, by the infant's fantasy.

Thus the practical reasons for denying, repressing and displacing these feelings are, at the very beginning, as strong or stronger than they ever will be again. And when these reasons are, at some early stage, translated into corresponding behavior of denying, repressing, displacing, transforming, <u>a powerful habit is formed</u>: these feelings are to be displaced, they are not to be expressed immediately, directly, toward the person or situation triggering them.

At the least, a strong, habitual <u>readiness</u> to displace or store, quickly and unconsciously, is formed. And this is reinforced in later childhood and adult life by the fact that it remains practically useful, survival-oriented and success-oriented, because so often (though not always) the initial situation is reproduced. The person who evokes the powerful emotion, by frustrating, attacking or humiliating oneself, is powerful--often, far more powerful than oneself--both in ability to hurt and ability to help, and it is therefore dangerous, just as in early years, to express or even consciously feel (with the risk of betraying) these emotions.

Yet the feelings exist, and search for an outlet; again, rather than risk a tacit expression of them toward their real object (who may not only be harmed and angered by this, damaging the relationship, but may see through this inadvertent behavior to its"meaning") it is safer to act on the habit of displacing the emotion, both consciously and in action.

Expressing anger or hatred at someone who is, in effect, a scapegoat, not only relieves the tension of the emotion but helps conceal its original, "true" target, for greater safety. This is all the more effective because others rarely "see through" it. I conjecture that the pattern of behavior is both so ubiquitous and so universally denied that other people--not wanting to see it in

themselves--do not regularly hypothesize it or perceive it in others.

Since the objective is to feel and express the rage relatively safely, the immediate target should be someone who--while not necessarily totally harmless or unthreatening--is less dangerous, in terms of ability to harm or to withhold a relationship or value--than the one initially evoking the emotion.

When it comes, especially, to physical violence, an "irony" results: the victim of the violence is not only weaker, in fact, extremely weak--that follows from simple prudence--but "innocent," having in fact done little or nothing to provoke the response in reality (though the perpetrator's conscious fantasy is different).

How can this satisfy one's desire for dignity, for vindication? After all, one is then acting as badly as the aggressor, acting "just like him." Exactly! One is identifying with the (power and majesty of, the parent-like nature, the arbitrariness and lack of necessary restraint of) the aggressor. If one cannot, for reasons of danger (and deeply ingrained and basically prudent habit) reverse roles with the actual aggressor--satisying as it is to do so in fantasy--one can do so in reality with a stand-in: who stands in not only for the "aggressor" but for the weak, needy, passive, infantile, vulnerable aspects of self that made one a target of the aggression, that invited it, and that "deserve to be punished," projected outward, denied as part of oneself, extirpated: from oneself, from the face of the earth...

This is part of the meaning, I have long hypothesized, of traditional scapegoats like the Jews, Armenians, women and children, in the eyes of their brutalizers.

I have long noted the pattern: Where one finds massacre, one finds massacre above all of the innocent (this could be almost be seen as definitional of massacre) and also, of the weak, the inoffensive, especially women and children, along with aged and sick (note the treatment by police of Ron Kovic, the paraplegic protestor).

Wild, unlimited, indiscriminate, out of control destructive rage is manifested commonly (except for certain frenzies on the battlefield, against actual combatants) on weak and innocent scapegoats. I am suggesting that this is not merely prudent (or cowardly) but that the very weakness, dependency and unthreatening character is what evokes the rageful behavior against this particular target, representing unconsciously the supposed aspects of the attacker's self that led to his own victimisation and humiliation, aspects of himself which he (virtually always a man) is ashamed and would like both to deny and destroy.

Some common characteristics of the situation are (1) an

immediate humiliation or defeat or humiliating injury, evoking a rage and desire for vindication of "honor" and "dignity" (restoration of disastrously damaged self-esteem) by "evening the score, restoring the balance, paying back" by acting as powerfully and destructively as the aggressor, acting the superior, like one's oppressor, cancelling the impression and reality of one's own relative weakness, incompetence, lower status. Yet (2) where the actual aggressor is inaccessible or too strong or invulnerable or too dangerous to attack.

The pattern I note is that the substitute for this work of restoring one's pride and image and working off the painful emotions is not a close likeness of the aggressor--somewhat more accessible, or less strong and dangerous, but still a fit match-- but rather a victim that is very much weaker, relative to oneself, than one was in relation to one's oppressor. (Or else, the inequality is great in both cases: not less in the case of the scapegoat).

Thus, the British campaign of bombing German cities begins immediately after the fall of Singapore. The Final Solution commences after the Germans are halted in Russia (though it may have been planned earlier: the degree of prior planning is just now subject to major controversy, sparked by Arno Mayer's assertion of the thesis suggested here). In general, victims of genocide are attacked just after or in the context of humiliation or failure involving the attackers: see Kuper's analyses. Later, in Japan and in Vietnam, strategic bombing is used more instrumentally, having become available as a wartime tactic.

My old hypothesis on massacre: It is humanly possible, available, both to leaders and followers, in part because: a) the original "aggressor" with respect to each human (this follows Melanie Klein) is a woman, a mother; other babies--siblings--also evoked powerful rage and hatred; and in torturing or killing women and children, one (male) is also attacking and denying/projecting the weak, wommanly and babyish aspects of oneself that made one vulnerable and ashamed (and later, both at the "oedipal stage" and at puberty and adolescence and later) threatened one's acceptance by male colleagues and powerful men).

[May 31, 1991: But this does not explain why massacres, genocides and torture are almost exclusively ordered and performed by males. Partly this simply follows directly from the position of males in (male-dominated) society, in the army, police and leadership, though this does not explain mob or individual behavior. Moreover, one could ask whether the prevalence of these phenomena has something to do with the domination by males in "civilized" society: obviously males in these societies (and probably in "primitive" society as well) have a greater acceptance of violence in general, and a greater preoccupation with power.

But is there not also a greater tendency among males for actual or threatened humiliation to lead to violent response, and a greater acceptance of violent risk-raking: the risk of killing, and the risk of dying in the course of pursuing violence? Why should this be? If women (and children: siblings) are the original aggressors, threats, dominators for all infants, female as well as male--which is the thesis not only of Klein but of Dinnerstein and others--why are women and children the later targets of violent aggression almost exclusively by males? (Dinnerstein does not address or answer this).

A hypothesis: Male infants, unlike females, find their sense of gender-identity associated with a sense of difference from the all-powerful, awesome Mother, where girls discover this aspect of their core-identity in "sameness, oneness." This would suggest that girls and women might find much more "natural, fundamental, familiar" a feeling of closeness, identity, inclusion in social relations, while boys and men, relatively speaking, would find themselves more comfortable than females with a perception of difference, separateness. Moreover, for boys, the intense ambivalence evoked (according to Dinnerstein and Klein) in all infants by the mother would, for the boys more than for the girls, be associated with a being who was (in gender terms) different.

I have never seen it suggested, but might it be true that projection as a defense is more available to or more associated with males than females? The notion above would suggest a greater tendency of males to associate negative traits or behavior or feelings--like, the negative part of the ambivalent feelings evoked at various times by the mother--with others who are different, not like the self.

If they were unconsciously to project various undesired self-traits onto others--whether because of a greater tendency to project, or not--or to displace angry, negative feelings from one target to another less dangerous, the projection or displacement might more often be onto others who were different: foreigners, "strangers," women. (Women would have incentive to do this, too, of course: but by these hypotheses, somewhat less: and, for perhaps quite different reasons, less violently.)]

Another issue: Shame and guilt may be equally commonly "inappropriate" in "realistic, adult" terms, not so much in being displaced from something else--though this may often also be true--as in being "evoked by the wrong things" in the first place. That is, I (and Patricia) observe that people rarely seem to feel shame, or guilt, about what they "should," in terms of their actual, adult, especially organizational behavior as leaders or followers--massive destruction for wanton, egotistical motives, rape, torture, murder, oppression, ecocide--but, more likely, for insufficient obedience or loyalty to vicious leaders, incompetence in carrying out immoral commands, or above all, for masturbation

and its accompanying fantasies.

This seems so universal as to raise a real question whether these emotions are, in a deep and long-run sense, socially useful: whether they can be redirected (as, say, the Berrigans or Brian Willson hope to do) toward the enactment of genuine social evil in the interests of motivating urgently needed change, atonement, redemption.

What forces in the self, and in society, will manipulate feelings of guilt and shame more effectively, to what ends? (Compare the question of the uses of patriotism, nationalism, or the instinct of revenge. Or more effectively use violence, censorship? Who will suffer more or benefit more, from "freeing" society of restraints on censorship or on vigilante behavior, from encouraging violent "direct action"? I have always believed, in these cases, that the Left had more to lose than to gain from such "freedoms").

Are the Buddhists right, then, in eschewing concepts of sin, guilt, shame? (As do, on the whole, Ellis and Knaus). A middle position, as Ellis and Knaus suggest, is to relate these only to acts, not to "personhood," overall personality or character, and to look particularly at "social, organizational" acts, much more than private, personal relationships.

[May 31, 1991:Indeed, I find it hard to believe that individual and social efforts to bring about social change can dispense with the notion of individual accountability and thus potential or implied blame, a basis for guilt or shame. But the the acts that need judging are above all precisely those done in an institutional setting, where individuals either as officials or followers are deploying the resources and power to harm of large organizations.]

Reckless gambles and vast massacres are available to national leaders as means of escaping short-run prospects of their personal (rationalized as "national") humiliation or defeat or reduction of power. The relevant feeling is desperation. (Is this absolutely necessary? Perhaps. Note the testimony in Barrett's article on LBJ on his anguish in the spring of 1965; supported by Goodwin's testimony on his actual paranoia, which may have been as much a result of his situation as a cause of his decisions).

[May 31, 1991: In sharp crises, one also often finds a leader's feelings of rage and desire for revenge, precisely because of having been thrust, in a humiliating manner, into the desperate situation.

This was the "crisis pattern"--which I further specified and labelled as the "Fait Malaccompli"--my research in 1964 revealed, from my studies of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Suez, the Skybolt

crisis, and the U-2 crisis. (Some aspects of it, though definitely not others, emerged in the secret decisionmaking on Vietnam that fall and the next year, and again later under Nixon). [Note May 31, 1991: the full, precise Fait Malaccompli crisis pattern was reproduced in the response of George Bush to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.]

In these international crises the element of scapegoating seems much less important (though the potential victims of an ensuing conflict would be, of course, almost entirely innocent scapegoats). In the leader's own mind, the target of his rage and threatened violence is precisely the person who humiliated him and threatened him with political failure. But the disproportionate level of risk and violence evoked does have the "mysterious," otherwise inexplicable quality--above all from the perspective of inside information on the actual perception of stakes and risks-- that calls for explanation in terms of some such notions as those above.]

What the Pentagon Papers revealed was the shallowness (and puzzling incompleteness) of the reasoning and argument, the decision-making; the lack of revealed concern for human costs, either Vietnmese or American; the lack, anywhere in the comprehensive account, of what seemed remotely adequate motivation for the risks and actual costs.

The same phenomenon appears in a realistic, detailed account (secret at the time) of decision-making surrounding the onset and continuation of Allied strategic bombing in World War II. Likewise for the atomic bombing, which, in reality, was simply part of the same process.

Likewise for the onset, and continuation, and tactics throughout, of World I.

And for Stalin's purges. Pol Pot's genocide.

All of these have a puzzling, mysterious quality to them, of being inadequately motivated, explained: of simply not conforming to our general understanding even of human folly and brutality. The same remains true, of course, of the Holocaust: especially in view of the realistic record of it (which reveals that Hitler's own fantasies, which give some adequate explanation for his own orders, were simply not that widely shared among Nazi leadership).

It is not simply a matter of destructiveness or great risk. Hitler's aggression in Europe and Russia, by contrast (like Japanese aggression in Southeast Asia) has a quasi-rational, understandable feel to it: great risk for great gain, even though the willingness of followers to undertake such risks is somewhat mysterious.

Likewise, Stalin's vast brutality in the collectivisation--as distinct from the later purges--has some brutal logic, though the costs in the end vastly and irreparably outweighed the gains measured in state control of agricultural output. (The strategic bombing has the appearance of this logic, too, till looked at closely. Perhaps the same reservation would be true of the collectivisation if we really saw the documents of the actual discussions, predictions, arguments, doubts, reported results...).

But these others remain mysterious. The foreseeable risks or costs seem vastly disproportionate to any possible gains. And that is true of Vietnam, in the light of the Pentagon Papers: and still more, with the research of Berman and Barrett on the actual advice presented to LBJ, by Clark Clifford and others. [May 31, 1991: Clark Clifford's memoirs, just published, confirm the impression of the above research.]

March 23, 1991

   Risks and Alternatives to Militarism after Desert Storm:
Lessons from the Secret History of the Cuban Missile Crisis

   In August, 1990, my ongoing research and writing project on
psychosocial sources of risk in military crises, focussing on the
Cuban Missile Crisis and drawing both on new data and my own
hitherto-unrevealed findings from my participation in the crisis
and from my prior secret official study of it, was interrupted by
the new crisis brought on by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait
and President Bush's response.

   As it became plain to me in late August that Bush's strategy
went beyond blockade (the first since the Missile Crisis) to
preparations for and threats of invasion (comparable to those made
by President Kennedy against Cuba in 1962, but this time, it seemed
to me, with no element of bluff) I postponed my efforts to
understand the current implications of a past crisis in favor of
directly resisting the escalation of a present one.

   After spending the last seven months doing everything I could
think of--educating myself, addressing teach-ins, lobbying
Congress, speaking at demonstrations, participating in marches and
vigils, meeting with peace organizations (e.g., SANE-Freeze, the
Military Families Support Network, and various ad hoc coalitions),
giving interviews for print, radio and TV, several arrests for non-
violent civil disobedience, and writing for publication--to avert
war in the Persian Gulf and then, to end the war before it led to
a US ground offensive, I now plan to spend the next several months,
in part, drawing lessons from failure (my own, the peace
movement's) and arguing with success (the President's).

   It seems realistic and useful to describe my near-term project
in these somewhat unpromising terms. I remember when I was young,
at a time when America was anxious for words of hope in the early
days of the Second World War, being impressed by the contrarian
candor of General Stilwell when he accompanied Chinese troops
emerging from Burma after being routed by the Japanese. Others
were trying to put the best face on this "setback." Stilwell said,
"I say we took a hell of a licking."

   We have just had a hell of a setback: those of us who have
worked for years--and with utmost urgency during this crisis--to
encourage peaceful resolution of conflicts, who saw real prospects
only a year ago that the ending of the Cold War could lead to a
truly new world order and a radical shrinkage of world armaments,
and who have sought--as Michael Klare once defined our long-term
goal--to "undermine the cultural hegemony of militarism."
(Though it is well to remember that General Stilwell's side did,
in the end, win the war.)

Even into the fall of last year--despite the President's secret preparations for an offensive war--his public espousal of sanctions, a purely defensive posture in Saudi Arabia, reliance on the UN and references to world law, along with pressure by the Soviets for a UN Military Command and by the Soviets and French for a variety of Mideast and arms control conferences, all kept alive the image of the world at a crossroads, with a real chance of moving within this very conflict along a genuinely new path, alternative to the war system. (To examine this alternative will be one of the goals of the study described below).

In January, with the reluctant approval of Congress and the UN, George Bush took the country along what is now clear was his prior commitment from the start to one of those roads, the old one. And his apparent vindication by late February means there will be no retracing of steps in the short run; it will be a while before we have as good a chance, if we ever do, for a real turning.

The struggle continues; but the cultural and psychological (as well as economic) roots of militarism in this society have just revealed their power--so ably drawn on by the President--and our own alternate values and visions have never, in my lifetime, been so openly and aggressively challenged.

The President's spectacular success in his own terms--which do not count Iraqi casualties, military or civilian, nor the near-chaotic instabilities in the region wrought by the destruction of Iraq, and which see as benefit rather than loss the exaltation of military values and armaments and the rejection of hard-won lessons of Vietnam--points toward further disdain for negotiation, exacerbation of conflicts, arms sales, embracing of friendly dictators, and further US military interventions. In one or another of the latter the lessons of Vietnam will probably be painfully regained.

In my view, the "Vietnam Syndrome" whose demise the President sought in war and now celebrates--understood as public allergy to overseas military adventures, skepticism toward official rationales, and a sense that citizen activism is legitimate and effective in averting or ending unnecessary and wrongful wars--was a national asset to be treasured, not an illness to be "kicked."

If that Vietnam Syndrome has truly been lost in the light of the Desert Storm "triumph," it is up to those of us who have opposed the arms race, intervention in Central America and this war to try to reconstruct it in our society, on a firmer, better-understood and broader basis: and to do this without the aid of disastrous new military experience.

That is a tall order. It calls for continued work of public education of the sort that burgeoned during the last seven months: teach-ins, lectures, interviews, demonstrations. These are in fact

scheduled; I have been invited to participate in a number of such events already, and I shall do so.

But it calls also for reflection, research, discussion among ourselves. Rampant militarism in the spring of 1991 needs not only to be resisted, it remains to be better understood; surely we who oppose it have had our surprises in recent months, and we must work to learn from them. That too I take as my task.

Precisely in this context it seems more relevant than ever to return to the research that preoccupied me in the summer of 1990, until the guns of August in Kuwait: contemporary lessons to be drawn from the secret history of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In early October I wrote a brief memo with the heading: "The Persian Gulf Crisis of 1990: What is to be learned from the previous prewar blockade?" [attached] drawing attention to numerous generally-unremarked parallels between these two episodes, the only two cases since World War II of naval blockades accompanied by threats of air attack and invasion.

The Cuban Missile Crisis ended as a triumph for President Kennedy (to his great surprise), a triumph of intimidation. It did not result in war, as many had feared; but in retrospect the risks were real, and in some ways different and greater than the participants realized.

President Bush's very comparable strategy of intimidation in the Persian Gulf did not succeed--indeed, it now seems unlikely that he expected or even really wanted it to succeed--and the war he had been preparing for six months ensued. Yet this crisis, too, ended in a Presidential triumph, one comparable in its drama only to Kennedy's in Cuba.

Was this victory achieved without major risk? What were the risks; were they worth taking; and why did the President accept the risks he saw? Even more confidently than it seemed in October, I can say that my own data on and interpretation of the Cuban Missile Crisis throws very useful light on these currently pressing questions.

The same is true for the questions: How did Saddam Hussein see his risks before and during the confrontation; and why did he accept the risks he saw? And: how did the two courses of action interact to increase risks for the region (including ecological disaster and possible nuclear first use--in response to Iraqi chemical attack--by Israel, the UK or the United States)?

In an earlier description of my ongoing research on psychosocial sources of risk in crises, I referred to three hidden sources of risk revealed in my research: the proclivity of those in power to gamble with catastrophe rather than suffer humiliation;

the readiness of subordinates to follow policies they may perceive as disastrous; and the tendency of leaders to underestimate the danger of loss of control of operations under combat conditions.

In the wake of US military triumph, the pertinence of the above sources of danger is most dramatically apparent on the side of Iraq. But unless the expressed or leaked concerns of US officials for the potentially grave risks for the US and its allies in this conflict were entirely feigned and without basis--I do not believe they were, at least for the first several months of the confrontation--the psychosocial roots of American gambling with catastrophe, and obedience, remain also relevant: as is a willingness to massacre "enemies" without great regard for the number or nature of victims, also a focus of my earlier research.

I happen to suspect that all these proclivities are related, in part, to the gender of the almost entirely male power structure. As I said in an interview in October, 1990:

> "What I'm concerned about could called ordinary male madness, especially among men of power. It has elements of recklessness, of super-sensitivity to humiliation, and--and to the end of avoiding humiliation or defeat--a willingness to kill vast numbers of people, mainly non-combatants. Unrestrained obedience is another feathre of this, a willingness to do anything, no matter how reckless or murderous, in response to a command or as part of a team effort.
>
> My own experience and study of government operations for a third of a century has led me to the disheartening conclusion that men in power may well take a high risk of killing any number of people and causing societal catastrophe rther than suffer an otherwise certain, short-run humiliation or political failure. Their own prospective loss, which they perceive as the nation's loss, of face and power and prestige, is more important tothem, more real and frightening, than the risk or sacrifice of other people's lives." [East Bay Express, October 19, 1990]

It is typical of intense crises, including this one, that it is much less unrealistic than usual to regard the behavior of a particular state as if it reflected the will and personality of a single individual actor, the national leader. That means that the psychological characteristics of that leader are unusually relevant. In this case it was frequently observed that the two leaders were driven to conform to the model of masculinity known as machismo. (Private comments by leaders also revealed this concern in the Cuban Missile Crisis and in Lyndon Johnson's decision to go to war in Vietnam). As I put it in January:

"Tom Paine said wars are caused by the pride of kings. Mid-January in the Persian Gulf, two willful men chose war. Each of them--George Bush, Saddam Hussein--preferred, and still prefers, to risk and sacrifice countless thousands of lives rather than to risk his own humiliation, rather than to seen as weak--unmanly, woman-like--or as backing off from commitments he had foolishly made.

Neither George Bush nor Saddam Hussein is a plausible champion of a "new world order." Each is, in his own way, highly representative of a very old world order: five thousand years of institutionalized male violence, machismo and militarism." [War News, Vol. One, No. 1, February 18, 1991]

Thus, I plan to explore, among other things, the factor of machismo as cultural underpinning for militarism and crisis behavior. If this is indeed, as I believe, an important factor in past and present behavior, there is an optimistic side to the finding: the potential of the "gender gap" revealed in polls during this crisis as the basis for an alternative politics. To quote myself once more:

"...it is men much more than women who are fascinated by the technology of warfare, and by the use of violence.

Women and men have a very different attitude about the idea of war as an instrument of policy, also. That's not a peculiarity of this conflict--it was true in Korea and in Vietnam. Interetingly, it was not true in World War II, which was accepted by the whole society as a necessary war. But when it comes to "optional" wars--that is, wars that are not in any real way compelled by a struggle for our national survival--there is a gender difference.

"...it's an avenue for hope. It points to a direction in which things really could change. Half our society consists of people--women--who, whether through genetics or socialization, are less fascinated by violence and by technology than the other half. And they're less inclined to believe what men in power tell them. As they strive for power and influence in society, they have a real chance to change the nature of power--to move toward a much less hierarchical, less militaristic society." [Focus Magazine, March, 1991].

It was often commented prior to the actual onset of hostilities in this crisis that the two-person process of intimidation going on was--like the Cuban Missile Crisis--comparable to a game of "chicken": once described by Bertrand Russell as a game characteristically played by [male] teen-aged delinquents in the US and by heads of state. Another question which I will address is: How does it come about that two heads of state find themselves--often with no prior foresight or intention

of it, even days ahead--locked into such a contest? A major finding, hitherto-unpublished, from my earlier study of crises seems to apply directly here.

A particular pattern of interaction that I first analyzed in connection with the Cuban Missile Crisis, described then as the "Theory of the Fait Malaccompli" (see attached memo of September 29, 1990) seems particularly illuminating with respect to Saddam Hussein's calculations surrounding his abortive attempt to annex Kuwait by means of a _fait accompli_, and to President Bush's reaction to the potential this posed for a debate humiliating to himself over "Who lost Kuwait?" This interpretation, among others, has important inferences for the likelihood, circumstances and risks of further crises--and how they might be averted.

The various lessons I would draw from the two crises considered together have the potential to help this country avoid reproducing the history subsequent to Kennedy's success in 1962, which led, in less than two years, to a fateful attempt by the same cast of officials to repeat that triumph in the Tonkin Gulf, the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam.

I propose to spend the next four months--in addition to continued public speaking and education on the political implications of the Persian Gulf War--on producing a book-length analysis, to be published either as a book or as a series of articles. I will address the themes described above, among others, bearing on the factors encouraging the dangerous, violent course taken in this and past crises and the potential and incentives for an alternative approach in the future: if there is to be a human future.

Daniel Ellsberg

March 11, 1991

Near-term Project Proposal: Educating the Public (and Myself) on Alternatives to Militarism, for America and the World

After spending the last seven months doing everything I could think of--educating myself, addressing teach-ins, lobbying Congress, speaking at demonstrations, participating in marches and vigils, meeting with peace organizations planning (e.g., SANE-Freeze, the Military Families Support Network, and various ad hoc coalitions), giving interviews for print, radio and TV, several arrests for non-violent civil disobedience, and even writing for publication--to avert war in the Persian Gulf and then, to end the war before it led to a US ground offensive, I plan to spend the next two months, at least, drawing lessons from failure (my own, the peace movement's) and arguing with success (the President's).

It seems realistic and useful to describe my near-term project in these somewhat grim terms. I remember when I was young, at a time when America was anxious for words of hope in the early days of the Second World War, being impressed by the contrarian candor of General Stilwell when he accompanied Chinese troops emerging from Burma after being routed by the Japanese. Others were trying to put the best face on this "setback," as on others; Stilwell said, "I say we took a hell of a licking."

We have just had a hell of a setback: those of us who have worked for years--and with utmost urgency during this crisis--to encourage peaceful resolution of conflicts, who saw real prospects only a year ago that the ending of the Cold War could lead to a truly new world order and a radical shrinkage of world armaments, and who have sought--as Michael Klare once defined our long-term goal--to "undermine the cultural hegemony of militarism."

The struggle continues; but the cultural roots of militarism in this society have just revealed their power--so ably drawn on by the President--and our own alternate values and visions have seldom been so openly and aggressively challenged.

The President's spectacular success in his own terms--which do not count Iraqi casualties, military or civilian, nor the near-chaotic instabilities in the region wrought by the destruction of Iraq, and which see as benefit rather than loss the discarding of hard-won lessons of Vietnam--points toward further disdain for negotiation, exacerbation of conflicts, and further US military interventions: in one of which the lessons of Vietnam will probably be painfully regained.

In my view, the "Vietnam Syndrome" whose demise the President sought in war and now celebrates--understood as public allergy to overseas military adventures, skepticism toward official claims, and a sense that citizen activism was legitimate and effective in averting or ending unnecessary or wrongful wars--was a national asset to be treasured, not an illness to be "kicked."

If that Vietnam Syndrome has truly been lost in the sands of Iraq, it is up to those of us who have opposed the arms race, intervention in Central America and this war, to try to reconstruct it in our society, on a firmer, better-understood and broader basis: and to do this <u>without</u> the aid of disastrous new military experience that erases the effects of the Persian Gulf "triumph."

That is a tall order. It calls for continued work of public education of the sort that burgeoned during the last seven months: teach-ins, lectures, interviews, demonstrations. These are in fact scheduled; I have been invited to participate in a number of such events already, and I shall do so.

But it calls also for reflection, research, discussion among ourselves. Rampant militarism in the spring of 1991 needs not only to be resisted, it remains to be better understood; surely we who oppose it have had our surprises in recent months, and we must work to learn from them. That too I take as my task.

Neither of these activities pays living expenses. (Over the last seven months, some 90% of my public speaking was without honorarium, publication paid little and much of my travel on antiwar activities was at my own expense). I welcome funding from private donations, for which a minimum budget is enclosed.

Ellsberg Speaks on Gulf War

lot longer and bloodier war than the public was led to believe at the outset."

Personal Inclinations

It is a war that Ellsberg would like to see called off. He says he simply believes that there are better and more humane alternatives to an all-out war.

Ellsberg says he would prefer to see the United Nations use a combination of sanctions and diplomacy to obtain a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

"Bush has to this date really rejected any negotiation whatsoever—he's even rejected the word," Ellsberg says. "The fact is that it's never too late to negotiate."

For a start, Ellsberg proposes that Bush abandon the notion of a ground offensive against Iraq. In Ellsberg's opinion, such an offensive would be a "mad enterprise." Specifically, he cites the difficulties of attacking field fortifications, which American troops haven't faced since World War II's invasion of Normandy.

On a purely political level, Ellsberg says rivalries between the armed services could help push a ground offensive forward. If the war were won with air power alone, he suggests, it would be an "ultimate catastrophe" for the Army, threatening their share in future defense budgets.

Looking at the strategic policy followed so far, particularly the swift buildup of ground forces followed by heavy air strikes, the policy analyst says the moves seem all too familiar. "We're fighting the war that the Joint Chiefs of Staff wanted to fight in Vietnam," Ellsberg says. "The only thing is, it would not have won in Vietnam."

The most plausible explanation

Ellsberg posits, is that the President genuinely believed, despite some advisors' warnings, that the Gulf conflict would be over quickly.

"There is some indication that the President was given quite realistic estimates of what the length and costs of the conflict would be," says Ellsberg. Even with this information, Ellsberg says the President may have "still believed it would be a short conflict."

On the other hand, Ellsberg adds, it is possible that Bush never had any expectation that the Gulf War would be brief, thus intentionally misleading the American people. In that case, Ellsberg says, the Mideast conflict is much more like Vietnam than most realize.

Ellsburg sees Bush's frequent comparisons of Hussein to Adolf Hitler as equally misleading. Such comparisons obscure the fact that since the end of World War II, the U.S. has successfully pursued a policy of containment and deterrence, he says.

Bush's "no appeasement" rhetoric dates back to 1939, Ellsberg says, criticizing the President for taking offensive action and ignoring 45 years of relatively successful policy.

"Saddam Hussein shows every sign of being containable and deterrable," Ellsberg contends.

Although Ellsberg calls Hussein "evil, ruthless and reckless," he places the Iraqi leader in the larger context of past U.S. support for unsavory Third World leaders. "Saddam Hussein is brutal to an extreme degree, but in a way that's not unusual among our own allies, which not long ago he was one of."

Ironically, Ellsberg says he sees "disturbing analogies" between Hussein and Bush. Both leaders, he suggests, are "very sensitive to the possibility of humiliation and of

appearing to back down." And both, in his view, display a willingness to risk thousands of lives rather than appear "weak or unmanly."

"Neither of them seems a very plausible creator of a new world order," Ellsberg says. "In fact, they seem to be the culminating form of an old world order, of patriarchy, militarism and machismo. They're a dangerous pair to be confronting each other."

Ellsberg says he is not surprised by expressions of public support for the war, comparing it to the upsurge in popularity for President John F. Kennedy following the Bay of Pigs conflict. "As a temporary phenomenon it's a reflex reaction, a clinging to authority in time of danger," he says.

But he cautions against equating support for the troops with support for the war, explaining that it is not "rational or sane to claim that supporting the troops is the same thing as supporting the President and his policies, which are putting the troops needlessly at risk."

In response to those who allege that dissent at home was responsible for the failure of the Vietnam War, Ellsberg says, "The time for controversy and debate and democratic participation is never more strong than when at war."

Ellsburg regards as faulty the argument Americans should automatically unite behind the war, now that it is underway. "For those people who believe that this war should not have been entered...the reasons for opposing the war have not diminished," he says.

"If there had not been that dissent, the Vietnam War would have gone on, brutally and bloodily, for years more. [The anti-war movement] saved thousands of lives on both sides."

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New Group Supports War